

2 Corinthians 9:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

Analysis

Yet have I sent the brethren—Paul dispatches a delegation (likely Titus and two unnamed brothers, 8:16-24) to ensure practical completion. The conjunction "yet" (de, δέ) introduces contrast: despite their readiness, action is needed. **Lest our boasting of you should be in vain** (ἴνα μὴ τὸ καύχημα ἡμῶν τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κενωθῇ) uses kenoō (κενώω), "be emptied, made void"—the same verb describing Christ emptying Himself (Phil 2:7). Paul's reputation and theirs are intertwined.

That, as I said, ye may be ready (ἴνα καθὼς ἔλεγον παρεσκευασμένοι ἦτε) employs the perfect passive participle pareskeuasmenoi, "having been prepared and remaining so." Paul doesn't doubt their intention but recognizes human tendency toward procrastination. Good intentions require concrete action.

This verse demonstrates pastoral realism: affirmation without accountability enables failure. True love provides structure for success. The delegation serves not as surveillance but support—helping Corinthians fulfill their own expressed desire.

Historical Context

First-century travel required careful planning. The brethren traveled from Macedonia to Corinth (several hundred miles) to coordinate the collection before Paul's arrival. This advance team would help organize contributions, ensure transparency (8:20-21, "avoiding blame"), and prevent the embarrassment of

unpreparedness. Greco-Roman culture highly valued honor and deeply feared public shame—powerful motivators Paul employs redemptively.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. When has accountability from others helped you complete what you genuinely wanted to do but might otherwise have postponed?
2. How do you balance affirming people's good intentions while providing practical support for follow-through?
3. What spiritual commitments currently remain in the "good intention" stage rather than concrete action?

Interlinear Text

ἔπειμψα	δὲ	τοὺς	ἀδελφούς	ἴνα	μὴ	τὸ	καύχημα	ἡμῶν
have I sent	Yet	G3588	the brethren	that	G3361	G3588	boasting	our
G3992	G1161		G80	G2443			G2745	G2257
τὸ	ὑπὲρ	ὑμῶν	κενωθῆ	ἐν	τῷ	μέρει	τούτῳ	ἴνα
G3588	of	you	should be in vain	in	G3588	behalf	this	that
G5228	G5216		G2758	G1722		G3313	G5129	G2443
καθὼς	ἔλεγον	παρεσκευασμένοι	ήτε					
as	I said	ready	ye may be					
G2531	G3004	G3903	G5600					

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 8:6 (Parallel theme): Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

